

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1-7. (canceled)

8. (currently amended) A viewed component of a vehicle instrument cluster, comprising:

a planar sheet;

an underlying layer printed on a surface of the planar sheet, the underlying layer having an outer surface, an inner surface and an outer boundary area, such that the inner surface faces the planar sheet and the outer boundary area is formed as a dispersing dot pattern; and

an outer layer printed onto the surface of the planar sheet, wherein at least a portion of the outer layer overlays the underlying layer, wherein the dot pattern includes a plurality of spatially separated dots such that along a direction outwardly from the outer boundary area of the first layer, spatial separation between the dots gradually increases and heights of the dots of the dot pattern gradually decrease and cause a sloped outer layer. “

9. (canceled)

10. (original) The viewed component of Claim 8 wherein the dot pattern includes a plurality of spatially separated dots having a cylindrical shape, such that a radial dimension for the dots gradually decreases in a direction outwardly from the outer boundary area of the first layer.

11. (original) The viewed component of Claim 8 wherein the outer layer having an inner surface facing the outer surface of the underlying layer and an outer surface serving as a visible face of the viewed component.

12. (original) The viewed component of Claim 11 further comprises an intermediate layer interposed between the planar sheet and the underlying layer and having an outer boundary that extends outside the outer boundary area of the underlying layer.

13. (original) The viewed component of Claim 8 wherein the planar sheet is comprised of a polycarbonate material.

14. (original) The viewed component of Claim 8 wherein the underlying layer is further defined as a colored ink applied to the planar sheet by a silk screen printing process.

15-19. (canceled)

20. (currently amended) A viewed component of an instrument cluster, comprising:

a planar sheet as a substrate of the viewed component;

a first layer located against a front side surface of the planar sheet, the first layer having a top surface, a bottom surface and an outer boundary area, wherein the bottom surface faces the planar sheet and the outer boundary area is formed as a dot pattern, wherein the dot pattern has a spatial separation that gradually increases, while heights of dots of the dot pattern gradually decrease, outwardly from the outer boundary area of the first layer; and

a second layer located against the surface of the planar sheet, wherein at least a portion of the second layer ~~non-uniformly~~ overlays and smoothly conforms to a transition between the planar sheet and a contour of the first layer, thereby forming the viewed component.”

21. (previously presented) The viewed component of Claim 20 wherein the second layer having an inner surface facing the top surface of the first layer and an outer surface serving as a visible face of the viewed component.

22. (canceled)

23. (previously presented) The viewed component of Claim 20 wherein the dot pattern includes a plurality of spatially separated dots having a cylindrical shape,

such that a radial dimension of the dots decreases in a direction outwardly from the outer boundary area of the first layer.

24. (previously presented) The viewed component of Claim 20 wherein:
the first layer is a first uniform thickness; and
the second layer is a second non-uniform thickness.

25. (previously presented) The viewed component of Claim 21 wherein
the second layer follows a profile of the outer boundary area.

26. (previously presented) The viewed component of Claim 25 wherein the
second layer slopes gradually towards the planar sheet in a direction of increasing
distance between dots of the dot pattern.

27. (previously presented) A viewed component of an instrument cluster, comprising:

a planar sheet as a base layer;

a first layer on a backside surface of the planar sheet; and

a second layer on the backside surface of the planar sheet, wherein the second layer overlays a portion of the first layer and defines an outer surface, an inner surface and an outer boundary area, the inner surface facing the first layer and the outer boundary area is formed as a dispersing dot pattern, thereby forming the viewed component, wherein the outer boundary area exhibits a sloped profile.

28. (previously presented) The viewed component of Claim 27 wherein the dot pattern includes a plurality of spatially separated dots, such that spatial separation between dots gradually increases within the outer boundary area of the first layer.

29. (previously presented) The viewed component of Claim 27 wherein the dot pattern includes a plurality of spatially separated dots having a cylindrical shape, such that a radial dimension of the cylindrical shape of the dots decreases in a direction outwardly from the outer boundary area of the first layer.

30. (previously presented) The viewed component of Claim 27 wherein the dot pattern includes a plurality of spatially separated dots having a cylindrical shape,

such that a radial dimension of the cylindrical shape of the dots decreases within the outer boundary area of the first layer.

31. (new) The viewed component of Claim 27 wherein the planar sheet exhibits a sloped profile in accordance with the sloped profile of the outer boundary area.